

Subject: FW: 2021/90584 Armitage Bridge Mill Building #29
Attachments: Building 29 RCHME SURVEY.JPG

WYAAS consultation response to be logged for the web. Thanks

Hi Adam,

Due to various issues and having only got the chance to check our holdings for Armitage Bridge Mills I have only just been able to determine that Building 29 has not been subject to a formal archaeological and architectural record.

If it not too late to request this I would be happy to recommend it is carried out as a post determination condition.

See attached description of Building 29 from the 1980s Yorkshire Textiles Mill survey identifying it as dating to c. 1830.

Best

David

no access to the works. The houses are probably the Brookes Cottages noted in the Census Returns, which demonstrate the occupational link of the tenants with the mills; in 1851 Benjamin Benton, Wool Dyer (Woadman), Thomas Burhouse, Woollen Cloth Dresser, and many other men, women and children with textiles occupations lived in the cottages (unpub. notes by C. Giles from Census Returns).

Summary, phase 1

By 1825 Armitage Bridge Mills was, by the standards of the day and in particular of the Holme valley, a very large woollen manufactory capable of producing finished cloth from raw material. Documentary evidence demonstrates the persistence of outworking, but hand spinning, hand weaving, scribbling and carding, finishing and fulling were all carried out on the premises, which also provided generous warehousing for raw wool and finished cloth. It is likely that many other buildings, including a contemporary dyehouse, have been replaced at a later date.

Phase 2, 1825-1842

The chief characteristics of the second phase of the mills' evolution are the expansion of some existing processes, the application of power to a wider range of processes, the provision of suitable buildings, and the adaptation of the original buildings to new uses.

The loomshop (29)

At the south end of the site is a prominent building, five storeys high and fifteen bays long. It is similar in many respects to the range identified as hand spinning and hand weaving shop (20, 21) in being tall and narrow and exceptionally well lit, mainly by windows in the north wall but on the top floor from both north and south. The form of the windows is identical to that of the windows in Building 20, with square lights and continuous sill and lintel bands. The building is, therefore, close in date to the spinning and weaving shops, but rather than dating from the pre-1825 period it is, perhaps, the 'new weaving shop' first mentioned in 1831 (Crump and Ghorbal 1935, 118). At about this time Brookes bought a large number of hand looms, and the identification of this building as a loomshop is suggested by a number of features. Firstly, it is far from the source of power and was therefore unlikely to have been intended for mechanically-driven machinery. Secondly, its siting shows that it was not intended as a warehouse. Thirdly, the proportions of the building and the ample provision of light strongly indicate a use as a loomshop, and the form of the building, with a long, narrow undivided room on each floor is similar to other known or suggested loomshops. Whether the whole building was used for weaving cannot be established, but some associated hand-powered or unpowered processes like warping and checking may have been accommodated. The west gable of the building had taking-in doors on some floors, but these were blocked when the stair tower was added. The site of the earlier stair is not known. On the first floor the easternmost bay is fireproof, probably because it acted as a heated office (compare with the similarly fireproof office in the first warehouse (18)).

The loomshop lost its function after the adoption of weaving by power loom. By the date of the first Inventory and Valuation in 1859, the loomshop is probably to be identified as the Balloon Room and rooms over, used for warping. In the Balloon Room is the one hand loom listed in the whole Inventory, perhaps a relic of the original use of the building. The beams within the loomshop show patterns of boltholes which demonstrate the

insertion of line shafting, and the 1859 Inventory lists all the shafting and belts used to power the balloons and warping mills. The 1889 plan shows the close association between the former loomshop and the sizing shed, dictated by the practice of sizing the warp before its removal to the weaving shed.

The importance of the loomshop lies in the evidence which it provides for the persistence of hand-powered weaving in the woollen branch of the industry, for the large scale of the Brooke operations, and for the desire on the part of the proprietors to concentrate their operations within the mill complex at the expense of outworkers, a trend which produced the fully-developed textiles factory.

Mill 2 (52)

If the addition of the loomshop in 1831 marks the expansion of an existing process, the construction of Mill 2 represents the need to provide a suitable building for processes newly harnessed to mechanical working. A new mill had been added by 1828-9 (Crump and Ghorbal 1935, 118), and purchases of machinery in the years immediately following included a number of power mules, power billies, and scribbling and carding engines. Also purchased was finishing equipment, including gigs, brushing mills and shearing frames. It is very likely that the application of power to these preparatory and finishing processes demanded the building of a new and large mill, probably to be identified as Mill 2. Certainly the large recorded cost of the new mill - £10000 - indicates a building of some size, and Mill 2 is the largest single building on the site. As a further aid to identification, the later Inventories and Valuations and the 1889 plan give evidence that the ground floor of Mill 2 was used as a Gig Room, and a continuity of working practice may be assumed from the date of the mill's construction to the date of the later document (for the purchases of machinery see Crump and Ghorbal 1935, 118-9; for the later inventory see Document 9).

The identification of Mill 2 with the "new mill" of 1828-9 is strengthened further by the evolution of power. The power plant which was to serve the mills up to and beyond 1868 was already an extension by 1834 (compare the 1868 Valuation, Document 12 with the 1834 Factories Inquiry Returns, Document 5). If Mill 2 had been built after 1834, it is reasonable to expect a large increase in the provision of power, for the building was equipped with a large stock of machinery. That no such addition was made to the power plant after 1834 is evidence that Mill 2 is pre-1834, is likely to be the new mill of 1828-9 and that its construction was connected with the building of the new engine recorded in 1832. The addition of a third water wheel to the original pair may also be linked with the New Mill, although the date of the new wheel is nowhere recorded.

Later alterations and a traditional method of building combine to make confirmation of the suggested date of 1828-9 difficult. The mill was built on to the west gable of the earlier mill. It is large for its suggested date, being of six storeys and of thirteen bays. Like the earlier mill, it has a slight projection on the north wall in the central bays, although there is no evidence that a pediment was intended on either mill. Mill 2 has an internal structure of wooden beams and floors; heavy planks are used between the beams, obviating the need for joists. The beams were supported at mid-span by cast-iron columns, but these have been cased throughout the mill as part of a later strengthening and are nowhere visible. The roof has trusses of principal rafter and collar form, using heavy timbers. Secondary principal rafters resting on the backs of main